SENIOR PACKET!

SENIOR TIMELINE

SEPTEMBER

- **Begin checking your creek mail daily** as Ms. Berve, Mr. Sewell, and/or your counselor will be sending you important post grad and scholarship information
- Attend the **College and Career Info Night** on **Sept. 29th at 6 pm** to get some important information regarding postgrad/college planning
- Attend the **CCSD College Fair** on **Sept. 24th** at **Smoky Hill High School** from **6-7:30 pm**
- Complete your Senior credit check with your counselor
- Begin using Naviance to sign up to attend college rep visits to hear detailed information about schools you're interested in
- Prepare to apply for **FAFSA** (opens **Oct. 1st**)
    - Get your FSA ID on the FAFSA website-you will need it to apply starting Oct. 1st
    - Complete the FAFSA forecaster to find out what your EIC (earned income credit) may be for college
    - This is based off of your parents' previous tax information from last year
    - Please visit www.studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa

OCTOBER

- Know your college admissions requirements and application deadlines
- **Begin the application process**
    - Use the 'Basic Application Steps' sheet in this packet
    - Ask your counselor or post-grad if you need help
    - Create an email account to use for applications and make sure it's appropriate!
    - If you use the common app, check to see whether each separate school has extra supporting documents you need to submit
- Continue working on your college essay and keep your resume updated
- Apply for **FAFSA** beginning **Oct. 1st**
- Attend the **Greater Denver College Fair on Oct. 1st** at South High School from 5:30-7 pm
- Take the **SAT** on **Oct. 3rd** if needed (register by Sept. 18th on College Board)
- Check the Naviance scholarship list every week and apply to the ones you qualify for
- Attend the **Denver NACAC College Fair on Oct. 17th** at the Colorado Convention Center from 1-4 pm

- **Colorado Free Application Days**
    - October 20th -22nd

NOVEMBER

- Pay attention to early action application deadlines in November!
- After submitting your applications, pick up a **blue transcript request form** in post-grad
    - Allow 2 weeks for processing and turn it in to Mr. Sewell
    - Letters of recommendation (if needed) must be complete before transcripts can be sent
    - Have a goal to **submit all applications by Thanksgiving break**
- Continue applying for scholarships
    - You also need to pick up a blue transcript request form after applying to scholarships if transcripts are required with your application.
- Sign up with Mr. Sewell to attend the **FAFSA Completion Workshops** in Post Grad (Dates TBD)
- **Apply for a Seal of Biliteracy** if you speak English AND another language fluently
    - This is a prestigious award on your diploma and you can earn a cord for graduation
    - Deadline to apply is **Nov. 30th** at **https://tinyurl.com/CCSDSealofBiliteracy**

DECEMBER

- If you haven't already, **finish your college applications** before winter break
    - Please turn in your blue transcript request form and finalize any letters of recommendation you need **2 weeks before winter break**!
- **Register for the College Opportunity Fund** at cof.college-assist.org if you plan to stay in-state for college
    - This is a stipend to help pay for your tuition at Colorado public/private schools if you're a resident
    - All residents going to college in Colorado qualify for this
- Finish your first semester with strong grades

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

- **Make sure you have all the correct classes you need for graduation**
- Attend your Spring Senior Class meeting
- Request 7th semester transcripts if your college requires them
- Applications to **two-year college programs** open up mid-January (i.e. CCA, ACC, CCD)
- Continue applying for scholarships
- Maintain strong grades
- Continue applying to colleges if you have not done so already

MARCH/APRIL

- All colleges should notify you of their decision by **mid-April** at the latest (unless they have a rolling admissions deadline)
    - You will be provided with a detailed letter explaining their decision and your financial aid package offered to you if you are accepted
- Attend the mandatory graduation meeting with your parent/guardian **on March 30th and 31st**

MAY

- Notify colleges of your decision to attend by **May 1st**
- Attend Senior Check Out Day
- Graduate! **May 27th at 1 pm** at the DU Ritchie Center

***Please note: dates/times may be subject to change*

Frequently Asked Questions

Why Naviance?

Naviance is an extremely helpful tool that our district pays for every student to have access to. Naviance is used to send all additional college application materials (i.e. letters of recommendation and transcripts) electronically to each school you apply to. Also, it is an important tool when it comes to your ICAP (Individual Career and Academic Plan). Some additional features of Naviance for Seniors include-

- College searches
- Test Prep
- Career searches
- Links to college websites
- Resume builder

Where else can I get college information?

You can search individual college admissions websites, use other college search programs (i.e. collegeincolorado.org, collegedata.com, etc.), attend college fairs, and sign up to meet with admissions representatives virtually. Also see the additional website and resources page included in this packet.

How many colleges should I apply to?

Generally speaking, 3-4 college applications is considered realistic and financially manageable. College application fees can be up to $80 per school and they are non-refundable so keep this in mind when choosing how many schools to apply to.

How can I meet college representatives?

Approximately, 70+ college representatives visit OHS each year to meet with students who are interested in applying to their school. Remember to sign up on Naviance to attend these meetings!

You can also attend college fairs in the area to speak with lots of different representatives at once. Come to post-grad to get the upcoming dates.

Why should I visit colleges in person?

It's important to visit schools in person and meet with students, staff, and faculty to ensure that it's the right fit for you. All colleges encourage prospective students to visit their campus and certain out of state schools will even pay for students to fly out and visit them.

ACT vs. SAT: Which should I take?

One or the other is often required for admission to many colleges or universities in the US but many schools will accept both. Consult specific college admissions websites to determine which test is required including whether the ACT writing portion or SAT subject tests are needed as well. There are also several schools who are "test optional" which means test scores are not required but you may still send them in if you think they will help boost your application.

Do I need to take the College Board SAT Subject Test?

Some highly selective colleges and universities may require students to take the SAT subject tests. Consult individual college admissions websites to determine if this is necessary for you. The most frequently requested subject tests are English Composition and Mathematics. It is strongly recommended that you complete these tests in October or November if they are required by the school you're applying to.

What happens after I submit an application?

After you complete the online portion of the application (this includes your essay if the school requires one), stop by post-grad to pick the blue Transcript Request Form. Remember, if you will be sending letters of recommendation, those need to be uploaded to Naviance as well before your transcript can be sent.

Please turn in your Transcript Request Form at least 2 weeks for the college application deadline especially during December, January, and February as these are the peak months for transcript requests. The first two transcripts you send to a college will be free and there will be a $5 fee for each additional transcript you request to be sent.

What are the different types of financial aid out there?

There are three types of financial aid-free money (scholarships and grants), borrowed money (loans), and work study (working for your college to help pay tuition).

Scholarships are awarded to students based on financial need, merit (grades/test scores), special talents, and/or diversity. Scholarship websites are a good place to search for private scholarships (like the ones in our Naviance list) and colleges often award scholarship packages to students who have been accepted (especially private schools). Students who exhibit financial need often receive additional grant money from the US government (i.e. the Pell Grant).

Loans are need based and you must pay back the money after you graduate. Subsidized loans will not accrue interest (extra money you have to pay back on top of the original loan amount) while you're in school and unsubsidized loans require students to make interest payments on the loan while they're in school.

Where do I go to find financial aid and what should I do first?

Filling out your FAFSA forms is usually the first step (remember you can start this after October 1st). Many scholarship applications will ask you if you have done this and in order to receive grants, loans, and work study, you MUST complete the FAFSA. Once you complete FAFSA, you will need to send your Student Aid Report (SAR) to the schools you're applying to.

If you plan to stay in Colorado for college, register for the College Opportunity Fund (COF) to get your in-state tuition price reduced. Go to https://cof.college-assist.org/ to apply.

Check the Naviance Scholarship list at least once a week starting ASAP to see which private scholarships you might qualify to apply for. You can also check out the additional scholarship search websites provided on the additional resources page. If you receive any of these private scholarships, be sure to send those awards to the financial aid office of the school you will be attending and let the scholarship organization know which school you're attending.

Apply to in-house scholarships at each of the specific schools you've applied to. When you are accepted to a school, you will be sent an award letter which shows which in-house scholarships and grants the school is offering you and what your remaining cost will be. Compare these letters to see who is giving you the best price.

If you still need loans at this point to make up the difference, you can apply for those through the financial aid office at your college.

OHS Student Athletes

NCAA Registration and Requirements

To play a sport in college at the DI or DII level, you must apply and register online with the NCAA Eligibility Center by going to https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3. NCAA requires your official transcript from OHS (fill out the Transcript Request Form) and your ACT/SAT scores directly from the testing agency.

- 16 core courses required for both DI and DII
- GPA
    - Only core courses that are NCAA approved will be used to calculate your core-course GPA.
    - DI: Minimum of 2.3
    - DII: Minimum of 2.2

NAIA Registration and Requirements (Small College Athletics)

Register with the NAIA eligibility center at play.mynaia.org. NAIA will also require your official transcript from OHS.

- GPA
    - Minimum of 2.3
    - Minimum of 2.0 with qualifying test score and top 50% ranking

Additional Websites and Resources

College Information

Cof.college-assist.org (sign up for college opportunity fund (COF) stipend. EVERY student enrolling in a college in Colorado must do this so that the state can provide money directly to your college for part of your tuition)
www.fairtest.org (provides a list of 815+ four-year colleges that do not use the SAT or ACT to determine admission)
www.unigo.com (website driven by college students themselves, it features searchable reviews, videos, and photos from over 1,000 college students)
https://www.niche.com/colleges/search/best-colleges/ (website features college guidebook information and current student opinions of hundreds of colleges with the ability to compare them side by side)

Testing Information

www.collegeboard.org (includes a searchable college database, financial aid information, College Board test preparation and online registration for the SAT)
www.actstudent.org (includes test preparation and online registration for the ACT)

Scholarship and Financial Aid

Studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa (this is the website where you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
www.fastweb.com
www.scholarships.com
www.Bold.org
www.denverfoundation.org
www.finaid.org (links you to many sources of financial aid and includes a "Scholarship Scam Alert" with information about scams and how to avoid them)
www.collegedata.com (college advising resource, covering basic college information, scholarship information, financial aid calculators, and much more!)
http://www.maldef.org/assets/pdf/1415_MALDEF_Scholarship.pdf (lists scholarships that do not require documentation)

Careers
http://www.bls.gov/ooh/ (The Occupational Outlook Handbook)
www.careerbuilder.com (search for jobs/careers through several categories)
www.xap.com (free, comprehensive college & career exploration site)
www.adworks.org (provides a variety of no-cost services to job seekers & businesses)

Vocab References

- **FAFSA-**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (the application you must fill out to get loans, grants, work study, and many scholarships)
- **EFC-**Estimated Family Contribution (the amount your family is expected to pay for your education according to the US Government)
- **Common Application-**A college application that can be filled out once and set to several different schools you're applying to (you still need to send a separate transcript to each school and not all schools allow you to use the common app)
- **In-state school-**A public, 4 year college or university in Colorado (if you're a Colorado resident, your in-state tuition is cheaper than students from out of state)
- **Out-of-state school-**A public, 4 year college or university outside of Colorado (you will pay that school's out-of-state tuition which will be more expensive than in-state tuition)
- **Deferred admission-**A request for the school you want to attend to hold your spot until a later date (i.e. starting after Fall of 2021)
- **Waitlist-**A school can "waitlist" you after you apply meaning that you may be able to still attend there if a spot happens to open up
- **Rolling admission-**The school doesn't have a hard deadline that you must apply by (this doesn't mean you should wait until the last minute because you could still miss your opportunity to attend if the school fills all of its spots)
- **Early Action-**Applying to a school at an earlier deadline to show you are REALLY interested in attending

- **Early Decision-**A binding contract that means if you are admitted to the school, you MUST attend it regardless of other offers you might receive and financial aid packages you are awarded at other schools
- **Undergraduate-**That's you! An incoming freshman studying to get a 4 year Bachelor's degree
- **Graduate-**Not you! A student who already has a Bachelor's degree and is applying to get a Master's degree or Ph.D.
- **Major-**What academic area you plan to spend your time studying and earn your degree in
- **Minor-**A secondary field of study you're interested in but wont be receiving a specific bachelor's degree for
- **Associates degree-**A degree that only takes 2 years to complete (usually at a community college or junior college)
- **Bachelors Degree**-A degree that takes 4 years to complete (at a college or university)